



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

Animal and Plant
Health Inspection
Service

Veterinary
Services

National Center for
Import and Export

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20707

Stakeholder Announcement on the Select Biological Agents and Toxins Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service is amending regulations governing the possession, use and transfer of select biological agents and toxins. The new interim final rule is on display today at the Federal Register, will be published on Monday, November 3, 2003, and is effective upon publication. It will be posted to the following website: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/rad/webrepor.html>

This rule will allow for the issuance of provisional registration certificates, pending completion of security risk assessments, for individuals and entities possessing these agents or toxins. The provisional measures also will provide additional time for the U.S. Attorney General to complete security risk assessments for those who have submitted all necessary information by Nov. 12.

This action is necessary to ensure that research, diagnostic and educational programs are not disrupted. The list of select agents and toxins was published in the Aug. 12, 2002, Federal Register.

The Agricultural Bioterrorism Protection Act of 2002 requires that entities, such as private, state and federal research laboratories, universities and vaccine companies, and individuals that possess, use or transfer select biological agents or toxins identified as a severe threat to public health or animal and plant health register with USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service or with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a part of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), depending on the agent they possess.

In December 2002, USDA and DHHS published interim rules to regulate the possession, use and transfer of select biological agents and toxins. The deadline for registration and full compliance with the regulations is Nov. 12.

Consideration will be given to comments received on or before Jan 2, 2004. Comments may be submitted by postal mail, commercial delivery or by e-mail. Send an original and three copies of postal or commercial delivery comments to Docket No. 02-088-3, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3C71, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, Md. 20737-1238. If you use e-mail, address your comments to regulations@aphis.usda.gov. Comments must be contained in the body of the message; do not send attached files. Please include your name and address in the message and use "Docket No. 02-088-3" on the subject line.

Comments received may be reviewed at USDA, Room 1141, South Building, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Persons wishing to review comments are requested to call ahead on (202) 690-2817 to facilitate entry into the comment reading room.



U.S. Department of Agriculture
Safeguarding Animal Health

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